

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORMSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Marshall Field & Company Store

AND/OR COMMON

Marshall Field & Company Store

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

111 North State Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION 7
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

CITY, TOWN

Chicago

VICINITY OF

STATE

Illinois

CODE

17

COUNTY

Cook

CODE

031

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

___DISTRICT

☒ BUILDING(S)

___STRUCTURE

___SITE

___OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

___PUBLIC

☒ PRIVATE

___BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

___IN PROCESS

___BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED

___UNOCCUPIED

___WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

☒ YES: RESTRICTED

___YES: UNRESTRICTED

___NO

PRESENT USE

___AGRICULTURE

☒ COMMERCIAL

___EDUCATIONAL

___ENTERTAINMENT

___GOVERNMENT

___INDUSTRIAL

___MILITARY

___MUSEUM

___PARK

___PRIVATE RESIDENCE

___RELIGIOUS

___SCIENTIFIC

___TRANSPORTATION

___OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

Contact: Joseph A. Burnham, President

NAME

Marshall Field & Company

STREET & NUMBER

25 East Washington Street

CITY, TOWN

Chicago

VICINITY OF

STATE

Illinois

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Recorder of Deeds Office, City Hall and County Building

STREET & NUMBER

118 North Clark Street

CITY, TOWN

Chicago

STATE

Illinois

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Chicago Landmark Structure Inventory; Illinois Land and Historic Site Survey

DATE

1974, 1975

___FEDERAL ☒ STATE ___COUNTY ☒ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Chicago Landmarks Preservation Council; Illinois Land and

CITY, TOWN

Chicago; Springfield

STATE

Illinois

Historic Site Survey

289

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Since its completion in 1907, the Marshall Field & Company Store, occupying the block bounded by Washington, State, and Randolph Streets, and Wabash Avenue in Chicago's Loop, has been one of the world's largest and most famous department stores. Designed by noted architect Daniel H. Burnham and constructed in four stages between 1892 and 1907, this gigantic edifice, measuring 340 by 385 feet, fulfilled a building program planned by Field himself as part of an effort to put increased emphasis on retail operations. Still serving its original purpose, the 12-story granite structure (the 1892 section rises only 9 stories) shows little exterior alteration and exhibits an interior which has retained much of its original vitality. The store is the oldest known Marshall Field structure still extant, and its site has housed Field stores since 1868. Both Field's mansion on Prairie Avenue and a wholesale building designed by H. H. Richardson and located on the block bounded by Adams, Quincy, Wells, and Franklin Streets have been demolished.

When Marshall Field, Milton Palmer and Levi Leiter formed their partnership in 1865, the firm occupied Potter Palmer's old dry-goods store at 112-116 Lake Street, and the entire wholesale retail operation was quartered in the four-story structure located here. In 1868, shortly after the firm had become Field, Leiter & Company, wholesale and retail operations were transferred to a six-story building owned by Potter Palmer at the corner of State and Washington. Three years later, however, this edifice was destroyed in the Chicago Fire. At this time, Field and Leiter decided to separate wholesale and retail, and a wholesale building was constructed at the corner of Market and Madison Streets while retail was temporarily quartered in a converted street railway barn at State and 20th Streets. In 1873 retail returned to State and Washington, occupying a building owned by the Singer Sewing Machine Company. In 1877 fire struck again, and the firm relocated, first to East Adams Street and then to 133-155 South Wabash. When the new Singer Building was completed in 1879 on the old site, Field purchased it and relocated his retail operations here permanently.

A few years after Field bought out Levi Leiter, he launched a building program for the wholesale and retail divisions. A new wholesale building designed by H. H. Richardson was erected in 1887 on the block bounded by Adams, Quincy, Wells, and Franklin Streets, and by the 1890's plans were afoot to enlarge the retail store. In 1893 an annex to the State Street store, designed by Daniel H. Burnham, was completed, giving retail frontage on State, Washington, and Wabash. No further construction occurred until 1900, however, due to the critical state of the economy. In that year Field

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8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES Site: 1868-present BUILDER/ARCHITECT Daniel H. Burnham
Building: 1892-present

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

At the time of Marshall Field's death in 1906, he was widely hailed as the "greatest merchant of his day."¹ After purchasing Potter Palmer's wholesale and retail dry-goods firm in 1865, Field rapidly expanded the scope of its wholesale division until by the 1880's, says historian Robert W. Twyman, "its customers were being drawn from an ever-expanding area that eventually stretched from the Appalachians to the Pacific Coast and from border to border."² In an era when manufacturing and transportation facilities tended to be confined to limited areas, gigantic firms like Marshall Field & Company played a vital role in distributing goods to retailers and supplying the needs of consumers. In fact by 1906, Field's firm, according to Twyman, was "the largest importer in the United States" and "was at one and the same time the largest single distributor in America in both the wholesale and retail fields" with sales of \$50 million and \$25 million respectively.³

Field is particularly noted for his activities in retailing, especially in the development of the department store. According to marketing expert James L. Palmer, Field "probably had as much to do with the development of the customer service concept of retailing as any merchant in America," and such familiar phrases as "give the lady what she wants" and "give the customer what he wants" are attributed to him.⁴ Field's insistence on courteous attention to potential customers and on doing almost everything humanly possible for their comfort and convenience made his department store one of the most famous institutions of its kind in the world. The store's "fame for its treatment of customers," says Twyman, "has come from its unique ability to give masses of people the feeling they have been served individually."⁵ In recognition of

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¹Chicago Tribune, January 17, 1906, 1.

²Robert W. Twyman, History of Marshall Field & Co., 1852-1906 (Philadelphia, 1954), 93.

³Ibid., 99, 168.

⁴James L. Palmer, The Origin, Growth, and Transformation of Marshall Field & Company (New York, 1963), 14.

⁵Twyman, History of Marshall Field & Co., 122.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

(See continuation sheet.)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY about 3 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A 16 447980 4636840
ZONE EASTING NORTHING
C

B
ZONE EASTING NORTHING
D

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

(See last page of description.)

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
-------	------	--------	------

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/ TITLE

Ralph J. Christian, Historian, Historic Landmarks Project

ORGANIZATION

DATE

American Association for State and Local History March 1977

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

1400 Eighth Avenue South

615-242-5583

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Nashville,

Tennessee

37203

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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CONTINUATION SHEET Marshall Field ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE one

received a building permit to erect a 12-story building on State Street north of his old retail store and extending to Randolph Street. Designed by Daniel H. Burnham and erected at a cost of \$1,750,000, the store was opened to the public in 1902. Two years later, an addition, based on Burnham's design, connected the new State Street store with the 1893 annex. Shortly before his death in 1906, Field approved plans for the demolition of the Singer Building and the construction of an addition in its place which when completed would give Marshall Field & Company command of the entire block bounded by State, Washington, Wabash, and Randolph.

Finally, on September 30, 1907, the completed retail store, valued at \$8 million and containing nearly 35 acres of floor space, was opened to the public.

With the exception of the 1893 Annex, the Marshall Field & Company Store is based on Daniel H. Burnham's design of 1900. Designed in a somewhat modified Commercial style, the structure follows the traditional Renaissance division of a building into base, body, and top. The three-story base rests on a series of 200-ton concrete caissons, each capable of bearing over 1 million pounds of weight. The first two stories of the base feature smooth granite pilasters that separate the bays, cover the steel support piers, and provide a sense of underpinning for the entire structure. Granite spandrels with recessed panels separate the first and second stories while the third story is separated from the upper and lower levels by stone entablatures at top and bottom which pass around the building to the 1893 annex. Stories 4 through 10 form the body of the building. They are faced with smooth granite and display the regularly spaced triple windows typical of the Chicago School. The vertical piers of this section rise uninterrupted to the top of the 10th story where they culminate in an entablature featuring a dentiled cornice. The crown consists of stories 11 and 12. Windows in this section are somewhat recessed, and the granite-faced piers are replaced by regularly placed fluted Ionic columns which span the two floors and support the heavy cornice which caps the structure.

Burnham's 1893 Annex, located along the southernmost and easternmost halves of the firm's frontage on Wabash and Washington respectively, is an excellent example of Italian Renaissance style

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architecture, and his later designs for Field were probably influenced by a desire to make them compatible with this structure. Much more ornate than the later additions, this nine-story section, faced with quoined granite, features terra cotta cornice work; both round-arched and rectangular window surrounds with heavy, radiating, stone voussoirs; one-over-one sash-type windows; and a heavy ornamented cornice near the roofline.

Entrances which are now covered with metal awnings are generally recessed and feature a combination of hinged and revolving doors. On the State Street (west) side of the store is an elaborate portico featuring four Ionic columns of Carrara marble set on granite pedestals and capped with a deck with plain entablature and carved marble balustrades. Two clocks are mounted on the store at the State and Washington and State and Randolph corners respectively. Each clock is 12 1/2 feet tall, weighs nearly 8 tons, and has minute hands more than 2 feet long.

Inside, the Marshall Field & Company Store exhibits very little structural alteration and a minimum of decorative alteration in key areas. The most striking interior features are two light wells located at the north and south ends of the store respectively. The 12-story well in the north end near the Randolph Street entrance is designed to resemble a courtyard, features white-painted steel and plaster Corinthian columns at each level, and culminates in a skylight in the roof. At the south end is the impressive Tiffany Dome designed by the renowned Louis Comfort Tiffany. Covering an area of 6,000 square feet, the Dome is the largest glass mosaic with an unbroken surface in the United States. Fifty men worked 1 1/2 years to install the nearly 1.6 million pieces of glass in the mosaic, and it was unveiled to the public in 1907 when the store was completed. Much of the original oak flooring remains, and in many areas of the store, the walnut and mahogany wainscoting is still in place. Also, the company has retained a large number of its original display cases.

In recent years Marshall Field & Company has been engaged in an effort to restore and retain the best of the store's original interior features. In November this process was completed on the State Street side of the store, and at present the Wabash side is undergoing similar treatment.

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Boundary Justification. The boundary includes both the entire Marshall Field & Company Store and the sidewalks that surround it, but the sidewalks do not contribute to the building's national significance.

Verbal Boundary Description. As indicated in red on the accompanying AASLH Sketch Map and in black on the accompanying U.S.G.S., 7.5' Series, Ill., Chicago Loop Quad. (1963, photorevised 1972), a line beginning at the northeast corner of the intersection of Washington and State Streets and extending northward approximately 385 feet along the east curb of State Street to the south curb of Randolph Street; thence, eastward approximately 340 feet along the south curb of Randolph Street to the west curb of Wabash Avenue; thence, southward approximately 385 feet along the west curb of Wabash Avenue to the north curb of Washington Street; thence, westward approximately 340 feet along the north curb of Washington Street to the point of beginning.

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Field's contributions, his statue, says historian Philip J. Reilly, has been placed "with those of John Wanamaker; George H. Hartford, founder of the Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company; and Frank W. Woolworth, founder of the five-and-ten-cent store chain" in the Retailing Hall of Fame in the Chicago Merchandise Mart.⁶

Since its completion in 1907, the Marshall Field & Company Store, occupying the block bounded by Washington, State, and Randolph Streets and Wabash Avenue in Chicago's Loop, has been one of the world's largest and most famous department stores. Designed by noted architect Daniel H. Burnham and constructed in four stages between 1892 and 1907, this gigantic edifice, measuring 340 by 385 feet, fulfilled a building program planned by Field himself as part of an effort to put increased emphasis on retail operations. Still serving its original purpose, the 12-story granite structure (the 1892 section rises only 9 stories) shows little exterior alteration and exhibits an interior which has retained much of its original vitality. The store is the oldest known Marshall Field structure still extant, and its site has housed Field stores since 1868. Both Field's mansion on Prairie Avenue and a wholesale building designed by H. H. Richardson and located on the block bounded by Adams, Quincy, Wells, and Franklin Streets have been demolished.

History

Marshall Field was born August 18, 1834, on a farm near Conway, Mass., to John and Fidelia N. Field. Although his family's circumstances were rather modest, young Marshall received a good basic education in local public and private schools. In 1851 he took his first job, a clerkship in the dry-goods store of Henry G. (Deacon) Davis in the nearby village of Pittsfield. Although his salary was only \$10 per week, he gained invaluable experience in retailing and a knowledge of the dry-goods trade. Four years later Davis offered him a partnership in the store, but Field, determined to go west where he believed opportunities were greater, refused.

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⁶Philip J. Reilly, Old Masters of Retailing: A History of the Merchant-Pioneers and the Industry They Built (New York, 1966), 152.

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In 1855 Field, who had managed to save nearly \$1,000 from his salary, moved to Chicago. Desirous of starting his own dry-goods business but lacking the necessary capital, Field with the assistance of his brother Joseph obtained a position as clerk with Cooley, Wadsworth and Company, the largest dry-goods wholesaler in the city. His first year with the firm he slept in the store and managed to save nearly half of his \$400 salary. He did such an excellent job in his position that he was soon promoted to traveling salesman. Again, he was successful, winning new customers wherever he went and causing a contemporary to remark that "he carried the trade of the Northwest in his pocket."⁷

When the firm was reorganized as Cooley, Farwell and Company in 1860, Field became a junior partner. Two years later, he became a partner by investing \$15,000 of his own funds, and in 1864 after another reorganization, the firm became Farwell, Field and Company. This arrangement proved to be short-lived, however, due to sharp personality clashes between Field and partner John V. Farwell, and by the end of the year Field had sold his interest in the firm.

While Field was settling his affairs with Farwell, Potter Palmer, perhaps Chicago's leading merchant, offered to sell him his wholesale-retail dry-goods business for \$750,000. Because Field lacked this much capital, Palmer worked out an arrangement that enabled Field and Levi Leiter, who had been a junior partner at Farwell, Field and Company, to become the senior partners in the largest dry goods firm in the West. On January 4, 1865, an agreement was signed which brought into being the firm of Field, Palmer & Leiter, capitalized at \$750,000. Potter Palmer contributed \$330,000 of this, Field, \$250,000, Leiter, \$120,000, and Milton Palmer, whose name was on the company masthead, \$50,000.

Despite some financial difficulties when the Civil War ended, the firm generally prospered and continued to grow. By 1867, Field and Leiter were able to buy out Milton Palmer and change the company's name to Field, Leiter & Company. During these early years, management of the wholesale and retail divisions, both in one building, was left to Leiter while Field handled purchasing, spending much of his time in New York City.

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⁷Quoted in Twyman, History of Marshall Field & Co., 12.

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By 1868, however, Field had returned to Chicago to stay, marking the beginning of a period of rapid expansion not to be slowed by natural disasters like fire or financial dislocations. Soon he managed to buy out Potter Palmer's interest, and in 1881 he bought Leiter's share of the business, giving the firm its present name of Marshall Field & Company. By the 1880's the wholesale division, which accounted for nearly 80 percent of net sales, was drawing customers, says Twyman, "from an ever-expanding area that eventually stretched from the Appalachians to the Pacific Coast and from border to border."⁸ In order to supply the needs of its customers, the firm established a network of buying offices in the United States and western Europe, and Field buyers traveled to all parts of the globe to seek out fine goods. In an era when manufacturing and transportation facilities tended to be confined to limited areas, gigantic firms like Marshall Field & Company played a vital role in distributing goods to retailers and supplying the needs of consumers.

Although the wholesale division was the lifeblood of his firm, Field became increasingly interested in retail operations, and he is generally considered by scholars to be one of the leading figures in the development of the department store. According to marketing expert James L. Palmer, Field "probably had as much to do with the customer service concept of retailing as any merchant in America," and such familiar phrases as "give the lady what she wants" and "give the customer what he wants" are attributed to him.⁹ Field's insistence on courteous attention to potential customers and on doing almost everything humanly possible for their comfort and convenience made his department store one of the most famous institutions of its kind in the world.

Field achieved this pinnacle of success, says his biographer Edward A. Duddy, because of "his thorough grasp of detail, his ability to select able managers, and a skillful handling of employees."¹⁰ In the 1880's, he proved this undemonstrably when he picked John G. Shedd to head wholesale and Harry G. Selfridge to head retail. Under Shedd, wholesale continued its remarkable

(continued)

⁸Twyman, History of Marshall Field & Co., 93.

⁹Palmer, Origin, Growth, and Transformation of Marshall Field & Company, 14.

¹⁰Edward A. Duddy, "Marshall Field," Dictionary of American Biography, Vol. III, Part 2 (New York, 1930), 367.

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expansion, its methods of operation were improved, and a program to manufacture certain goods was launched. Selfridge was largely responsible for upgrading the retail operation which had fallen behind the trend set by stores like Macy's and Wanamaker's. The number of departments was increased from 50 to 150, advertising was increased, and the store became a department store in the modern sense of the term. In 1885 under Selfridge's direction, Field's contributed several important innovations to the department store concept. According to retail historians Tom Mahoney and Leonard Sloane, Field's "was the first to establish an underprice basement and to use the basement for selling. It was the first to offer a personal shopping service and was among the first to offer a delivery service."¹¹

By the time of Field's death in 1906, the company, says Twyman was "the largest importer in the United States" and "was at one and the same time the largest single distributor in America in both the wholesale and retail fields" with sales of \$50 million and \$25 million respectively.¹² John G. Shedd succeeded Field as president, and for some years afterward the firm continued its remarkable growth. "In order to control the quality of merchandise and to increase the earnings of the company," Shedd, according to his biographer Edward A. Duddy, "embarked on a manufacturing program which led successively to the development of textile mills in North Carolina and Virginia, a rug-making factory in Philadelphia, and a lace-making industry at Zion City, Ill."¹³

By the late 1920's and early 1930's Field's wholesale division found itself in deep financial trouble. Although construction costs of the gigantic Merchandise Mart contributed somewhat to the problem, new trends in product distribution had emerged which reduced the need for large general wholesalers like Field's. As a result, wholesale was liquidated in 1935, and its manufacturing facilities sold. Retail remained profitable, however, and gradually, starting in the late 1920's, the scope of operations was expanded from the downtown store to the Chicago suburbs and beyond. This program has continued to the present, and for the fiscal year ending January 21, 1976, Marshall Field & Company reported total sales of nearly \$574 million.

¹¹Tom Mahoney and Leonard Sloane, The Great Merchants: America's Foremost Retail Institutions and the People Who Made Them Great (New York, 1974), 120. (277)

¹²Twyman, History of Marshall Field & Co., 99, 168.

¹³Edward A. Duddy, "John Graves Shedd," Dictionary of American Biography, Vol. IX, Part 1 (New York, 1935), 55.

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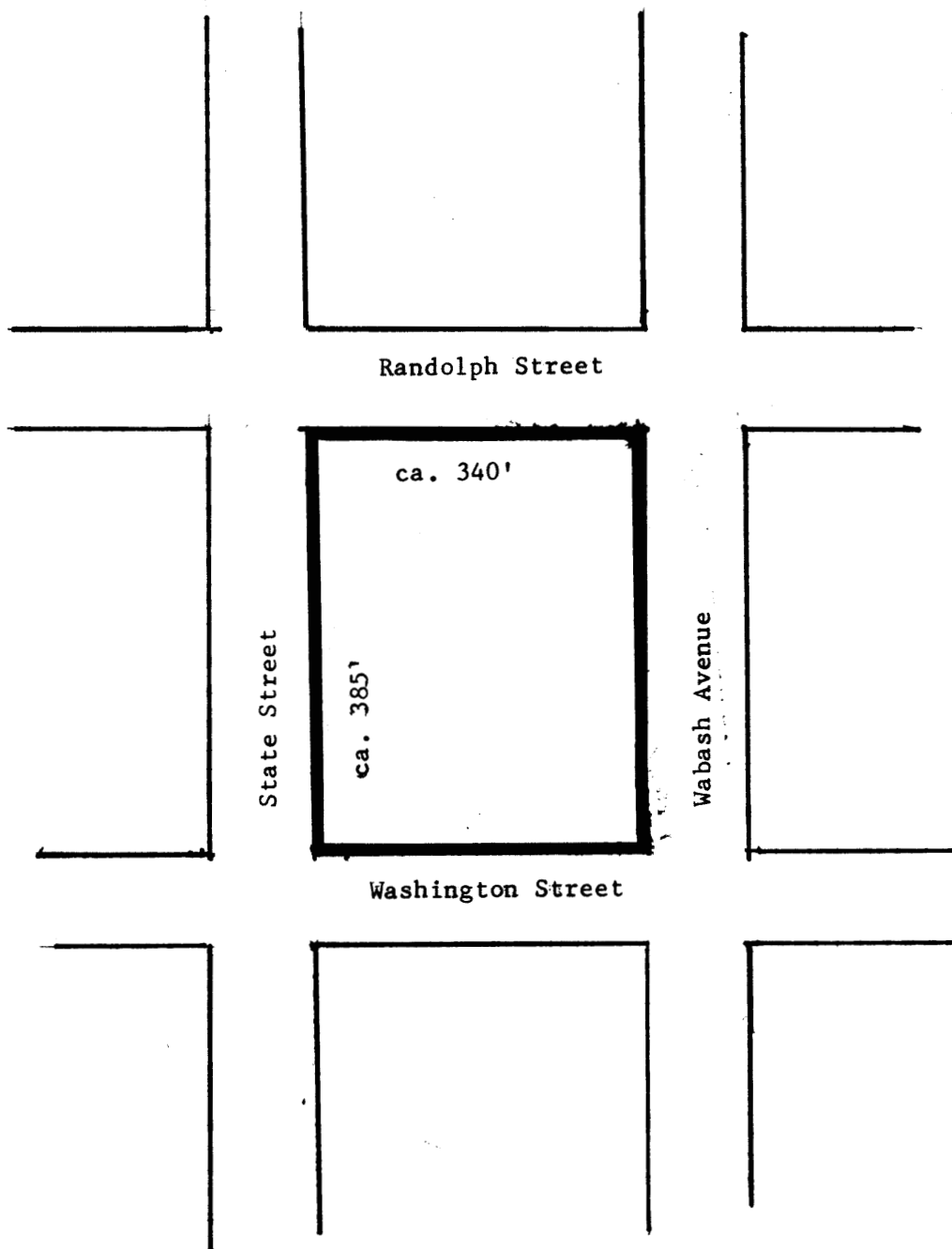
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Marshall Field & Company Store
Chicago, Ill.



Prepared by:
Ralph J. Christian
AASLH
1977

NOT TO SCALE

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